

# ATA Signal



AMERICAN  
THYROID  
ASSOCIATION  
FOUNDED 1923

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN THYROID ASSOCIATION

## ATA Annual Meeting Highlights

The 77<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held at the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa in Phoenix, October 11-15, 2006 and drew more than 900 attendees, from 32 countries and 47 states.

"The annual meeting brought a record number of attendees who traveled to Phoenix from across North America and around the world. The outstanding scientific program, organized by Susan Mandel and Tony Bianco, was judged by



**Drs. Ronald M. Evans and Björn Vennström delivered the plenary session lecture on "Thyroid Hormone Receptor: 20 years of Discovery."**

many to be one of the most engaging and innovative that we have had," said Gregory Brent, MD, ATA's secretary.

The program offered 49 clinical and basic symposia, 162 poster presentations and 16 Meet-The-Professor sessions. A substantial 237 abstract submissions were accepted, including oral, poster and short call presentations.

The plenary symposium, *Thyroid Hormone Receptor: continued on page 9*

## Search underway for new Editor-in-Chief of *THYROID*

The ATA Publications Committee solicits applications for the position of editor-in-chief of *THYROID*, the official journal of the ATA. Dr. Terry Davies will complete his term as the editor-in-chief on December 31, 2007 and has guided the journal over the last six years with great skill and dedication.

The new editor-in-chief will officially assume responsibility on January 1, 2008, but must be prepared to transition to the new editorial operation in the fall of 2007. The Committee seeks an individual who will continue to encourage

strong growth of the journal's quality, reputation and scholarship. The applicant must be a respected thyroid investigator who is well organized, innovative, energetic and dedicated to making *Thyroid* indispensable to clinicians and scientists alike. Proven experience as an editor, associate editor, or active editorial board member

on a peer-reviewed journal is essential. A willingness to work collaboratively to ensure that the journal meets the goals of both the ATA and the publisher will be *continued on page 2*



### Important ATA Member Notices

- Renew your ATA membership today (page 7)
- Apply for 2007 Thyroid Research Grants (page 7)
- Support the ATA Annual Fund (page 6)

**2007 Gaetano Salvatore Prize** — deadline December 30, 2006, [www.lincci.it/premi/index.php](http://www.lincci.it/premi/index.php)

### President's Message



I have been a member of the ATA for almost three decades. Over this time, our

wonderful organization has been instrumental in furthering my development as a clinical researcher and thyroidologist. Becoming your president is the most important honor that has been bestowed upon me in my professional life. We have just had one of the most successful ATA meetings in

*continued on page 4*

### IN THIS ISSUE

**ATA Updates Website**  
Page 2

**Secretary's Report**  
Page 3

**New ATA Officers and Directors**  
Page 5

**ATA Annual Fund**  
Page 6

**Thyroid Research Grants**  
Page 7

**Editor's Corner**  
Page 9

**Annual Meeting Highlights**  
Pages 10-11

## ATA Updates Its Award-winning Website

Members are encouraged to check out the ATA's redesigned website, [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org), to experience first-hand the improved navigation and search keys. The organizational data and structure elements were improved for more user-friendly access to the growing amount of online resources for professionals and the public available on the ATA site.

"With over 1.5 million visits per year, our web site is the authoritative source of thyroid information for patients and professionals," says Gregory Brent, MD, "The content is developed and maintained by the top thyroid physicians and scientists in the United States and around the world. The new design will make this information even more accessible."

The ATA web site provides valuable resources for health professionals, such as treatment guidelines and online governance materials for ATA members. The ATA also has future plans to expand its online physician education. Patient education materials are available to patients and the public, such as thyroid health patient education brochures in English and Spanish. An e-news service for patients, called 'Friends of the ATA,' has over 4,700 subscribers who receive news of the latest in thyroid health information.

A web consultant and Intertwine Systems of Baltimore worked closely with ATA executive director, Bobbi Smith, to redesign and re-launch the website. The new layout of the home page content better indexes

the sections dedicated to professionals, public/patients and publications/media to allow for streamlined navigability.

Each page has a print and email function to make this information easier to send to colleagues. Member services pages have also been expanded to provide more information important to the ATA member, including a searchable online directory.

A new section has been added to the left-hand column of the home page

that links patients and professionals with three specialized ATA web sites.

A first-of-its-kind website, ([www.thyroidtrials.org](http://www.thyroidtrials.org)), is dedicated to providing listings and information on all current thyroid clinical trials. The Thyroid Cancer Roadmap web site ([www.thyroidcancerroadmap.org](http://www.thyroidcancerroadmap.org)) provides information about new developments in basic, translational, and clinical research regarding the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid cancer for professionals and patients. The ATA web site also provides a link to the Thyroid Pharmacovigilance web site ([www.thyroidpharmacovigilance.org](http://www.thyroidpharmacovigilance.org)) to collect information about possible adverse events or product availability problems related to thyroid hormone medications from physicians and other health care providers.

The ATA is the recipient of the 2004 Aesculapius Award, given by the nonprofit Health Improvement Institute (HII) to recognize the quality content on [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org).



[www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)

### Search for new Editor-in-Chief, continued from front page

required. The applicant must also be proficient in the use of the latest electronic technology to expedite review and publication of submitted manuscripts.

Applicants should submit a cover letter, their curriculum vitae and a general statement outlining their vision and aims for *THYROID* during their proposed tenure (addressed to Dr. Kenneth Hupart, search committee chair), by email to ATA executive director, Bobbi Smith, at [bsmith@thyroid.org](mailto:bsmith@thyroid.org). Applications should arrive no later than January 1, 2007. Applications will be reviewed during the first quarter of 2007 and finalists must be available to be interviewed in person at the June 2007 Endocrine Society meeting in Toronto (or the May 2007 ATA Spring Symposium in Washington DC). Questions regarding this position may be directed to the search committee chair or the editor-in-chief.



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## ATA Signal

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Please notify the ATA of changes in contact information.

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The annual meeting was a great success with over 900 in attendance. Program Co-chairs Susan Mandel and Tony Bianco and their committee put together a wonderful scientific program. The pre-meeting advanced ultrasound course and endocrine fellows conference were both very well-received. Stephanie Fish and Mike McDermott directed the fellows track, that included over 70 fellows attending the entire annual meeting, as well as special programs designed for fellows. The ATA Alliance for Patient Education, directed by Alan Farwell, hosted a lay conference in parallel with our meeting. Dan Duick, our local "host" gave guidance in our arrangements, co-directed the ultrasound course, recruited his own patients and ultrasound technicians to assist in the course, and even arranged for his patients to participate in the lay conference panel. We are grateful for the many contributions that Dan made to a successful meeting. We appreciate the sustained commitment of our long-time industry partners, Abbott Laboratories, King Pharmaceuticals, and Genzyme, and welcomed the addition of two new CME program sponsors, Amgen and AstraZeneca. Our association benefits from a diversity of industry support for our programs and we appreciate the help that members have provided in this outreach. Our meeting featured the presentation of a number of new and innovative approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid diseases, especially thyroid cancer, that were featured in media stories around the world.

Congratulations to all of the six new ATA officers and directors, including Rebecca Bahn, our new president-elect, Rick Kloos, secretary-elect, and David Sarné, treasurer-elect. Special thanks to Don St. Germain for his four years of service to the Council. In addition, this is the first year in a decade that we will not have Paul Ladenson on Council; however, President David Cooper has secured him as Development Chair so he continues his service in a critical role for the ATA.

The bylaw changes to improve the governance of our society were approved at the business meeting and we will be strengthening our committee structure. The guidelines for conflict of interest have been adopted by the officers and directors and have been introduced to new officers and directors as they are invited to seek office. We hope to work towards continued transparency in our operations and give confidence to our members that we are operating without external influence.

The ATA has been funding thyroid research for 10 years and through the generosity of members, patients, and industry, has awarded over one million dollars in support of thyroid research. The Research Committee, led by Chair Irwin Klein, identified four outstanding recipients for thyroid

research grants this year. ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc. is now funding four grants per year (two renewed and two new), one for thyroid cancer research and one targeted to research in medullary thyroid cancer. ThyCa has been funding research through the ATA since 2003 and has already provided \$225,000. We are very grateful for all who have contributed to make these research grants possible.

We continue to maintain a high profile in advocating for thyroid-related issues that influence the public. Jim Hennessey represented the ATA at a recent FDA meeting evaluating thyroxine manufacturing standards. The Public Health Committee and Chair Joe Hollowell completed the paper, "Iodine Supplementation for Pregnancy and Lactation - United States and Canada: Recommendations of the American Thyroid Association," a project initiated by the late John Dunn. These recommendations were published in *Thyroid* this month and will certainly have a major impact in this important area.

The annual scientific meeting remains the flagship activity of our association and consumes the largest portion of our staff effort. Given the importance to our association, and the intense interest shown by our members, it may help to provide some insights into the process and the priorities in meeting selection and planning. We no longer have a local organizing committee for each city, but a working group consisting of the executive director, meeting coordinator, and the secretary, as the representative of the board of directors. The identification and selection of venues goes on year-round with visits to many potential sites. Most sites are chosen six to eight years ahead of the meeting, providing us the best selection and room rates. Since at least 30% of our attendees are international, any venue we select must be accessible with a single flight from a major US hub city. We also look for destinations that are distinct from the other hotels and cities used by our mostly larger sister societies. We strive for a mix of geographic locations and a mix of urban and resort settings. A segment of our association is often critical of resort meetings, although these meetings are consistently the most highly attended, and most popular with fellows, as was the case with our recent Phoenix meeting. Although the food and amenities are often more expensive in resorts, the room rates in the "shoulder" season that we choose are relatively low. Large meetings, such as The Endocrine Society, use a convention center and offer multiple hotel accommodation opportunities, often across a range of costs. We receive meeting space by virtue of the room block at our hotel, so we need to fill the host venue. It is our practice to always include a block of low-cost rooms for fellows at any of our venues. The room rates for our hotels, in the vast majority of cases, remain significantly below those offered by headquarters hotels for other endocrine meetings in North America and abroad. We have been consistently able to offer

*continued on page 6*

**President's Message**, continued from front page

our history, and we are now ready to embark on a number of new, exciting initiatives. I am grateful to our immediate past-president, Ernie Mazzaferrri, for positioning our organization to do great things, and for being a poised and thoughtful role model during my year as president-elect.

The ATA is continuing to play a leadership role in thyroid guideline development. Rick Kloos, our secretary-elect, is chairing an international task force that will draft the first evidence-based clinical guidelines for the management of medullary thyroid cancer. Following on the heels of our management guidelines for differentiated thyroid cancer, these new guidelines will provide much-needed guidance to clinicians who care for patients with this always challenging malignancy. Rebecca Bahn, our president-elect, has agreed to chair a new task force to develop evidence-based clinical guidelines for the management of hyperthyroidism. These guidelines will be an important update to our previous guidelines, published over a decade ago. I also hope that we will begin the process of revising our thyroid nodule and differentiated cancer guidelines sometime in 2007, possibly in collaboration with the European Thyroid Association. In addition to developing our own guidelines, we continue to work closely with The Endocrine Society and AACE as endorsers and contributors to their guidelines on thyroid disease in pregnancy and hypothyroidism, respectively.

We are already deep in the planning process for our ATA spring symposium, which will take place on May 18, 2007. The topic that we have chosen, *Thyroid Disease and Aging*, should be of great interest not only to clinical endocrinologists, but also to geriatricians, epidemiologists, and policymakers. Jerry Hershman is the co-chair of the Program Committee, and he is joined by Linda Fried, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Geriatrics division at Johns Hopkins. We have support from the National Institute on Aging and the American Geriatrics Society for this meeting, and we hope that the scientific presentations and deliberations will stimulate renewed interest in basic and clinical research related to thyroid physiology and pathophysiology in the elderly.

With the recent passage of revisions to our organization's bylaws, some standing committees have been elevated to subcommittees of the board of directors. They are the Publications, Finance and Audit, and Patient Education Committees. This change is in recognition of the integral

role these committees play in the day-to-day operations of our organization. New chairs of these committees are Matt Ringel, David Sarne and Alan Farwell.

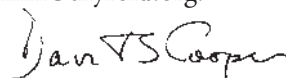
In addition, as a tangible expression of our deep commitment to patient-oriented lay organizations that form the Alliance for Patient Education, Alan Farwell will assume a position on the board of directors as the liaison to these important groups. I am happy to say that many of our patient education brochures are now available in Spanish, and I hope this will be the first step in collaborating with other patient groups around the world.

We recently supported the International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD) by nominating this important organization for a grant from the Gates Foundation, and we are currently reviewing a resolution that was passed at the recent European Thyroid Association supporting recent World Health Organization efforts to eradicate iodine deficiency. It is also my hope that the ATA will become an even more active supporter of ICCIDD, and reestablish a leadership role in the world's effort to eliminate this scourge.

Nothing would ever be accomplished by our organization were it not for our indefatigable staff, led by Executive Director Bobbi Smith. Charlie Emerson continues to do an outstanding job as our treasurer, and our organization's finances are in superb shape under his direction. Finally, I am very grateful to Greg Brent, our secretary (now called, for very good reason in our new governance scheme, the chief operating officer), for his dedication, outstanding leadership, and wisdom.

This is an exciting time for the ATA. We look forward to expanding our horizons nationally and internationally, to increase our membership, to strengthen our bonds with our alliance of patient-oriented groups, and to enhance our development activities so that we can continue to fund thyroid-related research at even higher levels than before.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the ATA, please let me know. And, if you have any suggestions or concerns, please contact me through our office at [admin@thyroid.org](mailto:admin@thyroid.org).



David S. Cooper, M.D.  
ATA President

**ATA Committee Chairs 2006–2007**

<b>Awards Committee</b> Valerie Anne Galton	<b>Education Committee</b> Erik Alexander	<b>Lab Services Committee</b> John Morris	<b>Program Committee</b> Peter Kopp, Basic Chair Michael McDermott, Clinical Chair	<b>THYROID Editor-in-Chief Search Committee</b> Kenneth Hupart, Chair
<b>Bylaws Committee</b> Edward Merker	<b>Finance and Audit Committee</b> Board Director: David H. Sarne	<b>Membership Committee</b> Virginia Sarapura	<b>Public Health Committee</b> Joseph Hollowell	<b>Research Committee</b> Irwin L. Klein
<b>Clinical Affairs Committee</b> Carol M. Greenlee	<b>History and Archives Committee</b> Joel Ehrenkranz	<b>Nominating Committee</b> Susan A. Sherman	<b>Publications Committee</b> Board Director: Matthew Ringel	<b>Website Advisory</b> Stephanie Fish
<b>Development Committee</b> Paul W. Ladenson		<b>Patient Education and Advocacy Committee</b> Board Director: Alan Farwell Whitney Woodmansee, Chair		



## New Officers and Directors Join the ATA Board of Directors

Based on the results of the fall 2006 election, six new ATA officers and directors were announced on October 13, 2006, at the ATA Membership Meeting during the Annual Meeting in Phoenix.

**David S. Cooper, MD**, of Baltimore, assumed his position as the 2006-07 ATA president.



**Rebecca S. Bahn, MD**, of Rochester, Minn., was selected as the 2006-2007 President-elect, which will be followed by a one-year term (2007-08) as president. Dr. Bahn is a Professor of Medicine at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and a Consultant in the Division of

Endocrinology, Metabolism and Nutrition at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. She also serves as Associate Chair of Medicine and Associate Director of Research for Career Development at Mayo Clinic.

An active member of the ATA since 1987, Dr. Bahn just completed a four-year term as a member of the ATA's Board of Directors. She is the editor of the *ATA Signal* newsletter, an associate editor of *Endocrinology*, and serves on the editorial board of the ATA's journal, *Thyroid*. She has served on the ATA Program, Nominating, Education, and Membership Committees. Dr. Bahn is actively involved in the ATA's Women in Thyroidology network.



**Richard T. Kloos, MD**, of Columbus, Ohio, was selected as the Secretary-elect of the ATA's Board of Directors for 2006-2007. His four-year term as ATA Secretary/Chief Operating Officer will be from 2007-2011. Dr. Kloos is Associate Professor for the Divisions of Endocrinology and Metabolism

and Nuclear Medicine at The Ohio State University (OSU) and the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital in Columbus. He is also Co-Director of The OSU Thyroid Cancer Unit. An active member of the ATA since 1999, he has served on the guidelines task force for the management of thyroid cancer and is currently chair of the medullary thyroid cancer guidelines task force.



**David H. Sarne, MD**, of Chicago, was elected as Treasurer-elect and a member of the ATA's Board of Directors for 2006-2007. He will then serve a four-year term as ATA Treasurer from 2007-2011. Dr. Sarne is an Associate Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. A member of the ATA since 1984,

he has been a member of the ATA Finance Committee since 1998 and its chair since 2001. He previously served on the ATA's Education, Awards, and Local Organizing Committees.



**Antonio C. Bianco, MD, PhD**, of Boston, a member since 1987, was elected as a director on the ATA Board of Directors, to serve a four-year term of office (2006-10). Dr. Bianco is Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of Research in the Thyroid Section at Brigham and Women's Hospital

and Harvard Medical School in Boston. He served as secretary/treasurer of the Latin American Thyroid Society from 1995-2001. He is an active scientist, with a research focus on thyroid hormone metabolism.



**Michael T. McDermott, MD**, of Denver, was elected as a director to serve from 2006-2010 on the ATA Board of Directors. Dr. McDermott is a Professor of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. He is also the Director of the Endocrinology

and Diabetes Practice and the Metabolic Bone Clinic at the University of Colorado Hospital. He has been an active ATA member since 1992.



**Alan P. Farwell, MD**, of Worcester, Mass., a member since 1990, has been appointed as Director of Patient Education on the Board of Directors of the ATA. This new, director-level position reflects the society's commitment to patient education and outreach. Dr. Farwell is an Associate

Professor of Medicine and Director of the Endocrine Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical School where he joined the faculty in 1990. He is an active clinician, teacher, and researcher.



**Ernest L. Mazzaferri, MD**, of Gainesville, Fl. and the ATA's 2005-2006 president, continues his service to the ATA, as do all past presidents, as a director in 2006-2007.

"Ernie brought his rich experience as an academic leader and high visibility as an internationally recognized thyroid cancer expert to his post as ATA president," says Gregory Brent, MD. "He was able to build alliances and open new avenues of influence for the ATA. We are very grateful for his dedicated service, visionary leadership, and especially his warmth and encouraging manner. We are looking forward to Ernie continuing to lead a number of his initiatives into his past-president year."

## Be a Supporter of the ATA Annual Fund

In October, the ATA sent an annual fund appeal letter for the first time in many years to remind members of the importance of philanthropic gifts to the ATA. As you know, the ATA Annual Fund supports thyroid research education, patient resources and fellows travel to the annual meeting. The Association represents the leading organization worldwide for thyroidologists to share new information and approaches that improve prevention, detection and treatment of thyroid diseases. It does so in a collegial context of shared professional development.

Many ATA members cannot envision what their professional lives would be like without the opportunities created by their unique society. The ATA meets your professional needs by:

- Bringing thyroidologists together from around the world
- Providing access to ATA's annual meeting and international conferences
- Serving as a sophisticated patient education resource at [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)
- Promoting thyroid drug safety and efficacy

- Maintaining a centralized list of clinical trials in thyroidology
- Funding thyroid research, along with partnering voluntary lay groups
- Developing thyroid disease management guidelines, like the 2006 Thyroid Cancer Guideline, in collaboration with other societies

Generous philanthropic support from our friends and members--above and beyond annual dues--permits the ATA to enhance its invaluable services. We depend on the generosity of annual fund donors, who make an annual contribution along with their dues renewal. We invite you to increase your previous gifts and join your officers and many dedicated members in donating to the ATA's vital and effective programs.

All donated funds will be dedicated to support of the ATA Research Grant Program, the ATA Fellows Track, and Annual programs and education, including online ATA Patient Resources. Last year the Annual Fund raised \$17,569 from 132 donors. All donors in 2006–2007 will be recognized in the March *Signal*.

### Secretary's Report, *continued from page 3*

"four star" hotel experiences at "three star" prices. We recognize the limited funds now available for many to travel, but also want to offer a high quality experience for those who faithfully come to our meeting each year.

Many of you have likely noticed that the ATA is among the last of the large associations to offer a full range of social events at each annual meeting, with an opening reception, evening social event, poster lunches, and banquet. These experiences offer the opportunities for social interaction and renewing of professional ties, experiences that draw many to the ATA meeting each year. The reason other associations have dropped these events, however, is the extremely high cost. Most members do not realize that the fees we charge for these events represent at most, 60% of the actual cost. We need to continue to consider the contribution of these activities to the annual meeting experience, but hope that members will understand the challenges to present these engaging activities, while keeping meeting registration at a reasonable cost.

We are growing in membership number, but more importantly, we are becoming a younger association with a greater diversity of disciplines and more women as active members. This is the result of the efforts many members have made to reach out and invite colleagues to join and become engaged in the work of the ATA. Our annual meeting, in a

single high quality venue with outstanding science and many opportunities for interaction, is distinct in character and draw many to come year after year. We will continue to work to provide this experience in the most cost-effective way possible.

The flexibility and generosity of our members was never more apparent than in the response to the challenges of multiple venues at our recent meeting. We were reminded of the deep commitment that our members and friends have for the ATA, expressing understanding and a willingness to sacrifice. We will always cherish the offers of some of our most senior members who were willing to move to our satellite hotel and take the shuttle to the meeting in order to enhance the experience for everyone. I am deeply appreciative of the uniformly positive messages that we have received and the generous nature of our members. Please take the time to thank and encourage each of our dedicated staff who works so hard to make our association operate efficiently and accomplish so much.

It is a privilege to serve as your secretary,



Gregory A. Brent, MD  
ATA Secretary

Read about the ATA's latest response to the FDA methods for assessing the bioequivalence of levothyroxine in the "Public Health" section of our website, [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)

## 2007 Membership Dues Renewals and Updates

It is that time of year again! All ATA members renew dues in December for the year ahead. Active member dues include the subscription to our official journal, *Thyroid*. All other members have the option of subscribing. Membership rates are significantly discounted from the regular subscription rate. Please encourage your library to subscribe as well. Dues have been raised ten dollars this year to cover the increasing cost of publishing the journal. Membership renewals are due on December 31, 2006.

You may renew your membership in three ways. You may pay your dues on-line in the "Member Services" section of the ATA website, [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org) or fax credit card payment to (703) 998-8893 or mail to the ATA office. For assistance logging onto the website, please contact the ATA office at

(703) 998-8890 or email us at [admin@thyroid.org](mailto:admin@thyroid.org).

Please update your email address as necessary to keep informed on ATA activities, as member news and surveys are sent electronically. As part of the renewal form, members in clinical practice may opt to be included in the physician referral on the ATA website. Please be sure that work contact information is current for an accurate referral. We receive a dozen or more calls every week from patients looking for a thyroid specialist so you can expect to hear that the "ATA sent me" in the near future.

Members are encouraged to renew as soon as possible to avoid any interruption in the delivery of *Thyroid* and other benefits. A \$45 late fee will be applied to all dues renewals after January 31, 2007.

## Apply for 2007 Thyroid Research Grants

New Investigators are invited to apply to the following three thyroid research grants in the areas of thyroid disease and thyroid cancer. The focus of these awards is to allow the gathering of preliminary data for submission of a more substantial application to the National Institutes of Health or other granting organization.

The ATA research grant program is accepting proposals for New Investigator-initiated research projects in the area of thyroid function and disease. Topics may include, but are not limited to, clinical thyroidology, thyroid autoimmunity, thyroid and the brain, thyroid hormone action and metabolism, and thyroid cell biology.

The ATA is pleased that ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc. continues to support new investigators for a research project in thyroid cancer and one in medullary thyroid cancer (MTC). Medullary thyroid cancer topics include research on pathogenesis, clinical aspects of the disease or treatment of MTC.

Research grants, up to \$25,000 annually, will be awarded for two-year terms, based on receipt and review of a satisfactory progress report from funded investigators in the fourth quarter of the first year.

Detailed guidelines on applicant eligibility and use of research funds can be found on the ATA web site, [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org). Proposals should be submitted electronically through the Research Grant Application feature on the ATA website. Proposals for research are due Jan., 31, 2007.

The ATA Research Committee ranks proposals according to their scientific merit. Authors of selected proposals will be notified in March to be invited to submit complete grant applications.

### 2006 Grant Recipients

The ATA would like to recognize the following researchers who were awarded thyroid research grants in 2006.

#### Sara Danzi, PhD

NYU School of Medicine/North Shore University Hospital, Manhasset, New York

*Novel Thyroid Hormone Based Therapies for Human Cardiac Disease*

#### Honey V. Reddi, PhD

Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota

*Determination of the oncogenic potential of PAX8/PPAR $\gamma$  fusion protein (PPFP) and elucidation of its mechanism of action in follicular thyroid carcinoma*

#### ATA ThyCa Grant — Thyroid Cancer

Groussin Lionel, MD, PhD

Cochin Institute, Paris, France

*Regulation and expression of dual specificity phosphatases in papillary thyroid carcinoma*

#### ATA ThyCa Grant — Medullary Thyroid Cancer

Xianmin Xia, PhD

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland

*Targeting p55PIK phosphoinositide-3 kinase (PI 3-kinase) in the treatment of human thyroid cancers*

#### Second-year Grant Awardees

Heike Heuer, PhD

Bin Xu, PhD

Erich Sturgis, MD, FACS – *ThyCa Grant*

Matthias Schott, MD – *ThyCa Grant*



*20 years of Discovery* was dedicated to the memory of Jack H. Oppenheimer, who first identified a nuclear thyroid hormone receptor. Ronald Evans, MD and Bjorn Vennstrom, MD discussed the cloning of the thyroid hormone receptor and shared their visions for future research in this area. The symposium was chaired by Herbert Samuels, MD, who made seminal contributions to the recognition of nuclear thyroid hormone receptors.

Program highlights also included a keynote presentation by Samuel Refetoff, MD, on *Genetic Defects Leading to Abnormal Thyroid Hormone Metabolism*. Dr. Refetoff spoke about a new syndrome where a mutation disrupts the function of the SECIS-binding protein-2, a critical protein for the synthesis of selenoproteins, and thereby resulting in a significant alteration of thyroid hormone metabolism.

D. Lynn Loriaux, MD, PhD, presented the Clark Sawin Memorial Historical Vignette, *Uncharted Seas: The Life of Fuller Albright*. The *Thyroid Grand Rounds* was moderated by Gil Daniels, MD, and addressed the timely and controversial topic of whether all thyroid nodules > 1cm require FNA.

The Abbott State of the Art Lecture was presented by Mitch Lazar, MD, PhD, and was titled, *Nuclear Receptors, from Repression to Metabolism*, which addressed the interface of thyroid hormone with other important determinants of energy expenditure.

The second annual fellows track, led by Michael McDermott, MD, and Stephanie Fish, MD, was enthusiastically received. "The presence of over 150 fellows, including those in the fellows track, was an encouragement as we look to the future of the ATA," said Dr. Brent.

### Special Award Recipients

During the Annual Meeting, the ATA honored five thyroid specialists with its Distinguished Awards. Three honorees delivered lectures highlighting the work that formed the basis for their award.

Douglas Forrest, PhD, was honored with the prestigious Van Meter Award, the ATA's oldest and most anticipated because it is kept secret until the recipient presents a lecture at the annual meeting. Dr. Forrest's lecture was titled, *Genes That Mediate Thyroid Hormone Actions: More Than Meets the Eye or Ear*.

Geraldo Medeiros-Neto, MD, PhD, received the 2006 Sidney H. Ingbar Distinguished Lectureship Award, which recognizes outstanding academic achievements in thyroidology. He presented his lecture, "Defective Synthesis and Secretion of Thyroglobulin: From Phenotype to Genotype."

Jayne Franklyn, MD, PhD, was named the recipient of the Paul Starr Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to clinical thyroidology. As part of this prestigious award, she presented a major lecture, *Causes and consequences of thyroid disorders*.

In addition to this, John T. Nicoloff, MD, of Los Angeles,

was honored with the Thyroid Pathophysiology Medal, which recognizes outstanding research contributions to the understanding of thyroid physiology or the pathophysiology of thyroid disease. Sheue-yann Cheng, PhD, of Bethesda, Md., is the Distinguished Service Awardee and was honored for her important and continuing contributions to the ATA.

### Patient Forum

The free, educational Patient Forum was once again offered to local patients, their families and the general public to discuss and answer questions about thyroid disorders by thyroid experts and patient education groups. This forum was presented by the ATA Alliance for Thyroid Patient Education, which includes the ATA, the Thyroid Foundation of America, ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, the Light of Life Foundation, and the National Graves' Disease Foundation.

### Ultrasound and Fellows' Day Events

The advanced ultrasound workshop held on the afternoon before the first full day of the meeting was sold-out weeks before the meeting. Enrollment is limited due to the number of available ultrasound machines that are donated 'in-kind' to the ATA for this outstanding educational event. Co-chaired by Drs. Dan Duick and Susan Mandel, the workshop drew over 60 attendees, 4 faculty, 10 ultrasound technicians, and six patients all contributing to make the four-hour workshop a success.

The ATA is appreciative of the *Endocrine Fellows Day* held by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center each year in conjunction with our annual meeting. The staff of the ATA coordinates travel and room accommodations with the staff of UCHSC for the benefit of over 100 fellows. Due to an unfortunate accident just prior to the meeting, Dr. Chip Ridgway was not able to chair the workshop and Dr. Bryan Haugen was invited to lead the day. ATA members serve as faculty.

### Media Coverage

A wide range of media outlets wrote stories about the research highlighted at the meeting, including Forbes.com, Medscape, WFIE-TV (Evansville, IN), *Clinical Endocrinology*, *Endocrinology News*, *Endocrinology Today* and *Oncology*. The local Phoenix media covered the topic of thyroid disease and highlighted the Patient Forum, including 780 KAZM radio, KSLX Radio, and KXEG/KXXT Radio, and the *SanTan Sun News*.

The meeting continues to be a favorite of attendees. "Despite the special logistical challenges this year, there was a wonderful spirit at all of the social activities and many opportunities for meeting colleagues and renewing friendships," said Dr. Brent. "When we were just a few days into the meeting, we were already hearing from many a desire to return to Phoenix and the Wild Horse for a future meeting, a sure sign of success."



## Editor's Corner: Nonthyroidal illness syndrome (NTIS) or nuclear receptor coactivator illness syndrome (NRCAIS)?



### Rebecca S. Bahn, MD, ATA Signal Editor

The nonthyroidal illness syndrome (NTIS) has long puzzled thyroidologists confronted with abnormal thyroid function tests in critically ill patients whose clinical thyroid status is difficult to ascertain. These usually reversible changes appear to be multifactorial, heterogeneous, in part adaptive, and in part maladaptive. Laboratory artifact, decreased T4 and T3 production rates, abnormalities in thyroid hormone transporters, reduced TRH secretion, and enhanced intrapituitary T4 to T3 conversion all likely contribute to the syndrome.

An important contributor to the NTIS appears to be starvation, and carbohydrate depletion is known to inhibit hepatic type 1 iodothyronine-deiodinase (D1), leading to a decrease in T3 and elevated reverse T3. Illness-associated cytokines also appear to play an important role in the development of the syndrome. Several of these, including IL-6, TNF-alpha, IL-1 beta, and sIL-2R, are elevated in the syndrome, and some correlate inversely with serum T3 levels. Suggesting causality is the finding that administration of IL-6 to healthy humans results in a decline in serum T3. Cytokine-mediated hypothalamic/pituitary abnormalities leading to diminished TSH secretion have also been described.

Recent studies by Jingcheng Yu and Ron Koenig at the University of Michigan focus on preventing the NTIS in mice by reversing cytokine-induced D1 inhibition (1). This enzyme is induced at the transcriptional level by its own end product, T3. The group showed previously that IL-1 and IL-6 impair this induction in cultures of primary rat hepatocytes, resulting in decreased production of T3 and further inhibition of the enzyme (2). They now report the effect of forced expression of a thyroid hormone receptor coactivator (termed steroid receptor coactivator-1; SRC-1) on D1 expression in IL-1 treated cells infected with an

adenoviral SRC-1 expression vector, or a control vector. They found that increased SRC-1 expression overcomes the inhibitory effect of IL-1 on D1, and concluded that this cytokine likely impairs the function of SRC-1. They went on to test this concept in an animal model of the NTIS produced by treating mice with endotoxin. Infection of the mice with the SRC-1 adenovirus did indeed modulate the decrease in hepatic D1 and plasma T3, suggesting that low circulating T3 in this model may be in part due to defective nuclear receptor coactivator function. In their discussion of results, Yu and Koenig point out that SRC-1 does not serve only as a coactivator of thyroid hormone receptors, but also participates in the activation of other nuclear receptors and transcription factors. Therefore, a cytokine-induced defect in SRC-1 function would be expected to impact the activation of many different genes. Since some of the genes induced by cytokines in NTIS are likely adaptive, a defect in SRC-1 action might also impair the induction of some beneficial genes, contributing to the poor outcome. Yu and Koenig comment in this context that thyroid hormone treatment in patients with the NTIS might in fact be harmful as it would "partition limiting amounts of functional SRC-1 away from cytokine-responsive, adaptive genes." However, they suggest that, if the nature of the cytokine-induced coactivator dysfunction were understood, treatment aimed at normalizing coactivator activity might be of broad benefit within the constellation of changes that constitute the NTIS.

1. Yu J, Koenig RJ. 2006. Induction of type 1 iodothyronine deiodinase to prevent the nonthyroidal illness syndrome in mice. *Endocrinol* 147:3580-85.
2. Yu J, Koenig RJ. 2000. Regulation of hepatocyte thyroxine 5' -deiodinase by T3 and nuclear receptor coactivators as a model of the euthyroid sick syndrome. *J Biol Chem* 275:38296-301.

### Upcoming Meetings

#### LATS XII MEETING

April 27-30, 2007  
Santiago, Chile  
[www.lats.org](http://www.lats.org)

#### 9<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Endocrinology

April 28-May 2, 2007  
Budapest, Hungary  
[www.ece2007.com](http://www.ece2007.com)

#### AACE 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Clinical Congress

April 11-15, 2007  
Seattle, WA  
[www.aace.com](http://www.aace.com)

#### ATA Spring Symposium: Aging and the Thyroid

*Endorsed by the American  
Geriatric Society*  
May 18, 2007  
Washington, DC  
[www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)

#### The Endocrine Society ENDO 2007

June 2-5, 2007  
Toronto, Canada  
[www.endo-society.org](http://www.endo-society.org)

#### 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting ETA

Leipzig, Germany  
September 1-5, 2007  
[www.eurothyroid.com](http://www.eurothyroid.com)

#### 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the ATA

October 4-7, 2007  
New York City  
[www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)

**For more  
information, visit**  
[www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)

# Highlights of the 77th Annual Meeting



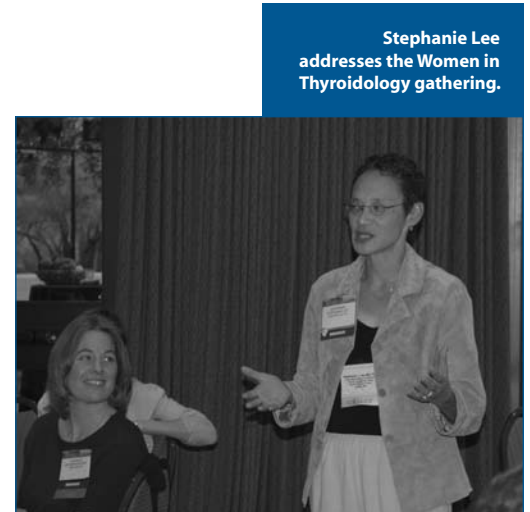
Douglas Forrest delivers the Van Meter prize lecture.



The Annual Meeting program draws a crowd.



Geraldo Medeiros-Neto delivers the Ingbar award lecture.



Stephanie Lee addresses the Women in Thyroidology gathering.



Annual Meeting Co-chair Susan Mandel explains the diagnosis of a patient during the Ultrasound Workshop Practicum.



New attendees gather at the welcome reception.



ATA member Joe DiStefano and friends provided lively entertainment at the Welcome Reception.

# Phoenix, October 11–15, 2006

Co-chair of the ATA Fellows Track, Stephanie Fish and daughter, enjoy the relaxing atmosphere at the Opening Reception.

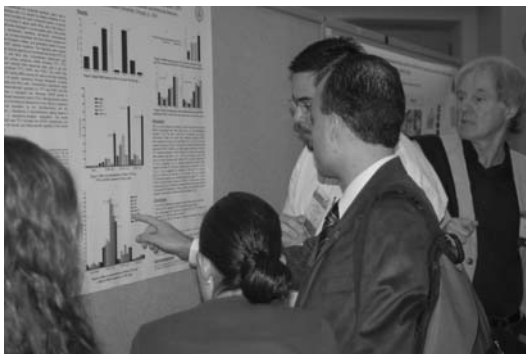


ATA Fellows Track participants enjoy the warm ATA welcome.



ATA Secretary Greg Brent, Leslie Sawin, Lynn Loriaux, and then-ATA President Ernie Mazzaferri gather after the Clark T. Sawin Historical Vignette.

Jim Hennessey tries his hand at lassoing a "steer" at the ATA barbeque under the stars.



The poster presentations drew scientific interest throughout the meeting.



ATA headquarters staff, Patrice Dickens, Bobbi Smith and Theresa Ronk, receives accolades of a job well done from Dr. Greg Brent, Secretary/Chief Operating Officer of the ATA.

ATA Director of Patient Education Alan Farwell and Light of Life Foundation Founder Joan Shey discuss thyroid health issues during a Phoenix radio interview.





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American Thyroid Association

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Washington, DC**

ATA spring symposium endorsed by the American Geriatrics Society

A Publication of the American Thyroid Association